

The VVise Merchant,  
OR, THE  
Peerless Pearl.

Engaging  
CHRISTIANS  
To Trade for  
H E A V E N.

Set forth in some short, Choice, and Pious  
Meditations.

Delivered in Two  
SERMONS.  
In the City of York: Upon the 13th. of  
*Matthew 45, 46, Verses.*

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By *Tho. Calvert*, Mr. A. late of *Sedneys*  
Colledge.

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*Turtul, ad Martyr.*  
*Tanti viireum? Quanti verum Margaritum.*

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The Wise Merchant,  
O R,  
*The only Pearl of Price.*

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Mat. 13. 45, 46.

*Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a Merchant-man, seeking goodly pearls: who when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.*

**I**N the World all the talk is of a Rich Merchant; but the Word of God commends to us the Wise Merchant, that Trades in Spiritual Wisdom, and gets to himself the Treasures of the King-

(2)

dom of heaven. This is a wise Merchant indeed, that his Trading and Merchandize exalts him to heavenly wealth. In this chapter we find such an one; this is the famous Chapter of Parables, preached by our Saviour, setting out the Kingdom of heaven, and grace of the Gospel by seed-corn, wheat, mustard-seed, leaven, hid treasure, a pearl, a draw-net. There are seven parables in this Sermon, which was preached by Christ out of a Ship, the people standing upon the shore to hear him. Two of the parables are proper for the Sea; one of a draw-net cast into the water to catch fish, another of a Merchant sailing over Sea, into the Indies to buy pearls and precious stones. In all these the Kingdom of heaven, which he mentions, is the Kingdom of heavens grace, even the grace of the Gospel below, and the preaching and efficacy of it, which is the Kingdom of heaven above, begun below, and that which brings us to salvation. When Christ was ready to be revealed in his preaching, works, & miracles; the Baptist tells the people, the Kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Gods

2 Verse.

Parous in  
Mat. 11.  
Comment



(3)

Gods heavenly dispensation of the Gospel to the Church, makes the Church be called heaven. As the Prophet calls the restoration of the Church, the planting of the heavens, and the creating of new heavens, and new earth. he preaching of the word draws us to Christ, the chief benefit of that Kingdom. Hereupon Christ expresses himself in the 19 verse, by the word of the Kingdom. And the taking away of the Gospel from the Jews, is called the taking away of the Kingdom of God from them.

Gloss in

Rhetor.

Sacr.

Isa. 51.15

Isa. 65.17.

Mat. 13.19

Mat. 21.43

The several parables in their intents are to shew several effects of the grace of Christs Gospel: this of the pearl is to shew the unworthiness and preciousness of Christ and his grace above all things in the world, that we count worthy and costly; the worthiest of them are but worthy to be given away to procure Christs grace; all are to be forgone, that we may get this pearl. When he saith, *The Kingdom of heaven is like a Merchant-man, &c.* The meaning is this, a man that would seek Christ and his grace, he must go about it, as a Merchant goes about his traf-

sicking for Pearls and precious stones. He takes great pains in travelling to the places where they best may be had; he uses his wits and judgment to have those are the rightest and richest; when he hath found an admirable pearl indeed, the best he can light on, he will part with all he hath to purchase it, as knowing the purchase of it will be worth all his labour and cost, and bring him in all his money he laid out for it, and much more.

Even so every one that would be partaker of Christ, and his grace of the Gospel, he must see an unprizeable excellency and worth in this heavenly Jewel, that he will lay out all pains and cost to be partaker of it; yea and count it the best bargain that ever he made, and that it will make him for ever, though he part with the treasures and pleasures of the world, if he had them all, to compass, and get possess of that precious blessing, which will set him up a gracious Merchant on earth, a glorious Merchant in heaven.

Here is, 1. The kind of the commodity, merchandizing for pearls.

2. The

2. The diligence and labour about them, and that in two things.

1. He seeks them, travels by Sea and Land for them.

2. He seeks them with his brains, as well as his pains; he seeketh them with wit and judgement; and that in two things also appears.

1. He seeks goodly Pearls, *et alios*  
*maris* fair and great Pearls; he contents not himself with having mean and common Commodities, he seeks with choice the best, as judging the best best cheap.

2. In seeking with judgement, he refuses many, and with judgement lighting on the best, he knowing the worth of it, he parts with all he hath, to buy a rare pearl, because he knows it will quit the cost.

Thus is a wise Christian set forth.

1. His Trade is to deal in spiritual merchandise.

2. Diligent he must be, to seek with all labour and travel.

3. Intelligent and Judicious he must be, to seek goodly Pearls; and wise a-

among them, to know which is clearly the best, and when he lights on Christ and his grace, to be at any cost; give all his worlds comforts and wealth to get possess of Christ's grace. He is no wise Christian, no Merchant for heaven, unless he judge Christ of more worth, then all the wealth and good things of this world.

*Points of Observation are these two.*

Doctrinē. 1. Christ and his grace is the richest Merchandize, and the most precious pearl that can be had.

2. A wise spiritual merchant will use all diligence, and part with all he hath, to buy this pearl.

1. For the first Doctrinē, the preciousness of Christ & his grace, we shall best know by asking at the great Jewellers shop, the Scriptures, what is the worth of it: hear what God hath pronounced of Christ from heaven. *This is my wel-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.* Here is the vertue of this commodity, it carries with it this occult quality, that it brings those that bear it, to possess the good will and pleasure of God. Whoever carries Christ in their heart, they have *Philtrum* *Jebove*; by him they may give God

God a love portion when they please, he cannot but love them, and delight in them. As the life of *Jacob* was bound up in the life of *Benjamin*; so the heart of God is bound in Christ and his grace; they both constantly go to one volume. God's heart inclosed in the heart of a gracious man, is a pearl indeed. to which all the pearls in the world are but as Cockle-shells, and check-stones. They say, the excellency of pearls is in their greatness and fairness: how excellent then must this pearl be? of whom it is said in the Word, *he is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand*: that is, there is no beauty and excellency to that of Christ. The Father is enamoured with looking upon him; the Angels bliss is in beholding him; and the Saints that have tasted of the grace of Christ, the mouths of their souls, are put out of taste to all other things: and to conclude, if it were put to their choice, they had rather have the least measure of his grace & peace, then all the riches of the known and unknown world, & be still strangers to him: to this purpose, saith *Peter*, to them that believe, Christ is precious; for he is a stone E-

lect

*Res boni  
manu*

*κοχλιδία  
et corbā-  
gia*

*Can. 5. 10*

*Psal. 34. 8.*

lect of God; and precious to God : I  
 shall speak a little, but not lead into a  
 large discourse of pearls , and their  
 nature. *They are found in a shell-fish like  
 an Oyster ; they are one of the precioussest  
 and costliest Commodities in the world ;  
 vanity of men and women, affectedly dot-  
 ing on them, hath made them them so, on-  
 ly to hang at the ear and adorn the neck ;  
 Which made the sober Heathen complain  
 that they wore them not only single in  
 their ears in his time, but they had joyn-  
 ed many together at their ears, one hang-  
 ing upon another. And the madness of  
 women, said he, had not subdued men e-  
 nough to their humours , unless two or  
 three Patrimonies did hang down at ei-  
 ther ear. Cleopatra the Famous Queen  
 and Curtezan had two pearls at her  
 ears, reckoned worth fifty millions of sil-  
 ver. One of those , at a supper she took  
 from her ear , and put it in vinegar to  
 dissolve it , and then drank it off to her  
 wanton Lover Mark Anthony, that she  
 might win the wager , to make a costlier  
 Supper then his. She would have pluckt  
 the other away too, for him to drink it, but  
 they saved it , as being the fairest pearl  
 in the world. A costly draught, at thirty  
 millions.*

Non satis  
 muliebris  
 infania vi-  
 ros subie-  
 ceat, nisi  
 bina ac  
 terna pa-  
 trimonii  
 singulis a-  
 ribus pe-  
 pendille-  
 ut. Senec.  
 l. 7. de be-  
 nefici.  
 Plin. Nat.  
 Hist. l. 9.  
 cap. 35.  
 Budeus  
 lib. de As-  
 Salmuth  
 ad Panci-  
 riar. p. 1.

(9)

millions. Might not this have relieved so many millions of poor being sold, and the price distributed amongst them? Not only was this Heathen vain, but many Christian Gentlemen pride themselves in wearing many of them at their ears and necks, which would well relieve all the poor in their parish for some time.

But those I pass over, to see a more prizeable lustre in the Grace of Christ, unto which all pearls are but dung and excrements. This we shall now endeavour to shew, the super-excellency of this one spiritual pearl, Christ and his Grace.

Christ is God's pearl, lies in the bosom of the Father, he is his *Unic.* & Joh. 1. 18. *Unigenitus*, the only one, and only begotten of the Father, and which no other pearls know or have, he is full of grace and truth. Joh. 1. 16.

There is no trading in *Mar del Zur* Gonzal. the South-Sea, and Island of pearls, Fernand. (where the excellentest natural pearls Ovidus. of the world are to be got) can procure Joh. 4. 10. this Christ and his grace. This is the great gift of God alone, brought up Joh. 1. 18. from the bottom of the great Sea of 14. 15. his



Rom. 9. 16 his fatherly heart, to bestow upon the  
 Eph. 2. 8, lost world. Heaven, Earth, and Sea  
 9. say, it is not to be had from us, but on-  
 ly from God as a father. Nor is it the  
 gift of any mans industry, not of him  
 that willeth or runneth, nor of any  
 mans wit and wisdom, but only the  
 donative of Gods great free love.

Lapillus in Pearl is but the gifts of the Seas  
 ipsa ostrei superfluity; some say they breed by  
 carne nas- Thunders and showers; others think,  
 citur ac however they breed, they are a disease  
 grando so- in the shell-fish, as the little swellings  
 let in su- in Swine. Sure they breed in men and  
 illa. women a disease of prodigality, to pay  
 Atheneus. so costly for them; of vanity, to be  
 lib. 3. cap. proud of them. But the grace of Christ  
 8. is a thing of absolute perfection, the  
 sovereign help to spiritual health, and  
 curing all our souls diseases; yea, it  
 gives us the way and walk to eternal  
 life. A man may live long, and be a ve-  
 ry happy man, and yet never see a  
 pearl, nor know what it means. But  
 without interest in Christ, man is  
 worse then a beast for his end; without  
 relation to Christ, Angels are Devils,  
 and damned spirits: we have no sound  
 comfort on earth, no hopes of heaven,  
 but



but dead and out of the way, without Heb. 10. 19  
 his grace, who is the new and living  
 way: To be without his grace, is to Joh. 8. 24  
 merchandize for the grave and hell. If  
 you believe not that I am he, said  
 Christ, you shall dye in your sins. If a  
 Merchant had traded all his life for  
 gold and pearls, and had engrosed to  
 himself the chief riches of the *Indies*,  
 yet if he know not Christ here, Christ  
 will never know him hereafter. Riches 2 Pet. 1. 11  
 are not the key, but Christ and his 10, 11, 12  
 grace, to give us an abundant entrance 1 Pet. 1. 18  
 into the everlasting Kingdom of our  
 Lord and Saviour. For we were not,  
 nor could not be redeemed with cor-  
 ruptible silver nor gold; no nor with  
 pearls, but with the precious blood of  
 Jesus Christ, a Lamb unspotted. All the  
 pearls in the world, brought to one  
 heap, could not redeem half of a Sca-  
 vengers soul, or Scullions, or meanest  
 begars. In Jesus Christ are hid all trea-  
 sures, all pearls are in him. There are 4  
 precious pearls found in Christ. He 1 Cor. 7.  
 is made unto us of God, wisdom, righ- 30  
 teousness, sanctification, and redem-  
 ption. The least of these is better than  
 all the glory of the world, & whatever  
 the

the Devil Pagenated by shew.

1. To Christ, for Wisdom. Christ and his grace is the book of Gods continual study and meditation. God never any way so much vented his wisdom, as by sending Christ into the World, to save man by his grace and merit. This grace of the Gospel, Eph. 3. 10. in the very Doctrine of it, is called the manifold wisdom of God. Yea, Christ is made the wisdom of the Saints, he makes them wise with the wisdom of God, and they are called the children of wisdom. All the wise men and great heads in the world, are fools Mat. 11. 25. without Christ; and Christs fools are 1 Cor. 1. wiser then the Worlds Doctors. For Prov. 3. 14. the foolishness of God, is wiser then 15. the wisdom of men: Wisdom is better Merchandize then that of pearls and rubies; and the wisdom of Christ above all wisdoms.

He is made our Righteousness. Where Christ and his Grace goes, Righteousness goes. To acquit a malefactor at the bar, is better then to give him a pearl. We are condemned at the bar of God's Justice, Jesus Christ comes and answers for us, puts his

his blood upon us, the judge presently pronounces, as *Pilate* of Christ, I find no fault in them, I see no sin in them, for my Son Jesus hath justified them, they have his righteousness, and they are righteousness.

*Sanctification.* Christ's Grace sanctifies and cleanses our polluted natures, gives us his spirit, and makes us holy as he is holy.

He is our Redemption, and what a precious thing is this? When I should dye, and have my due to be condemned, Christ comes and saith to me, as *Rebecca* to *Jacob*, thy curse be upon me Gen. 27. my Son. Poor sinner, lay upon me all <sup>12.</sup> guilt, cast thy sins upon me, I'll answer <sup>Isay 53.</sup> for them: I have born thy sins in my soul and body upon the tree. O Righteous Father, did not I suffer all that was due to these sinners, and unrighteous ones? I have satisfied thee for them. let these go free. It is both mercies & justices plea, that these should not suffer, and I suffer too. Let the debtors live, because the surety dyed <sup>2 Cor. 5. 21</sup> for them, <sup>Gal. 3. 13.</sup> Paul would have it hung as <sup>Rom 8. 1.</sup> an Orient Pearl about the neck of all <sup>1 Thel. 1.</sup> believers, there is no condemnation to them <sup>10.</sup> that

Fernelius.

that are in Christ Jesus: for Jesus delivereth us from the wrath to come. The Apothecaries have a good receipt called *Diamargariton*, made of pearls and other precious things, for help and comfort in bodily diseases; but no pearl, save the only pearl, the blood of Jesus Christ, his grace can heal us of the burning Fever by the guilt of sin; scorching the Conscience with the apprehension of it, or remove the least part of our deserved Curse.

Christ must needs be precious; for whatever we have from him, or is in relation to him, is precious. Whatever this pearl touches, is turned into pearls. The Gospel is precious, because it is the glad tidings of salvation by a blessed Saviour. The promises of Christ are exceeding gracious and precious promises. The faith of believers, yea, the least spark of Faith is very precious. In Christ be got into the soul, though like a Kitchen boy thou liest among the pots never so poor, yet thou art a precious soul in the Lords eye, and beautiful in his sight, as a fair Dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold. They shall be mine

Quicquid  
calcaverit  
hic rosa  
fiet perfis-  
us a pet. I.

psal. 68. 13.

mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I Mal 3.17.  
 make up my Jewels. Be a believer, and Esay 43.4.  
 thy very blood is precious, and thy life.  
 Since thou wast precious in my sight,  
 thou art also honourable. Thy death  
 is precious. Let an holy believer dye as  
 the Lord will, in beggery, water, fire,  
 Martyrdom, any way of torments, yet  
 right precious in the sight of the Lord. Psal. 116.  
 is the death of his Saints. Thy tears, thy 15.  
 prayers are precious, if they savour of  
 faith in Christ, and love to Christ; God  
 hath a bottle for the precious water of  
 Saints tears. Yea, at the last day, when  
 all the gold and pearls in the World Psal. 36.8.  
 shall lose their glittering, and be quite  
 out of request, for riches profit not in  
 the day of wrath, faith in Christ will  
 get an entrance into the Kingdom of  
 heaven. And thus the servants of Christ Zeph. 1.12  
 from living amongst pearls of grace, end  
 in an endless possession of pearls of  
 glory in Heaven: where by an allegory  
 about rich & glorious things on earth  
 the Kingdom of Heaven and new *Jerusalem* is said to have twelve gates, Rev. 21.12  
 which are twelve pearls, every several  
 gate of one pearl. Thus I have endea-  
 voured to shew you the excellency of  
 this

this Merchandise in pearls; how far this kind exceeds all other, for there is variety of pearls.

1. There is the pearl in the eye, that is an infirmity.

2. There is the pearl in the ear, and that is a vanity.

3. There is a pearl in the head, and that is knowledge with curiosity.

4. There is a pearl of the Court; that is *Hamans* pearl, honour and dignity.

5. There is the Pearl of the World, that is a heavy and massie one, wealth and riches.

6. But the pearl of Christ and his grace is the peerless pearl. A man may  
 Joh. 17. 3. perish with all the other, but this is a  
 1 Cor. 2. 1 pearl to Salvation, to know Iesus  
 Christ crucified; this is a pearl in this  
 world, and in the world to come too.  
 Give me that pearl, which will be a  
 pearl indeed at the day of judgement.

Doct. 3. A wise spiritual merchant will use  
 all diligence and industry to find, and  
 then part with all he hath to buy this  
 pearl, Christ and his grace. Let me  
 then speak to all that hear me this day,

exhorting them in the words of the A-  
 postle; *Brethren you see your Calling*, 1 Cor 1.  
*O follow your Calling.* We are all Mer- 26.  
 chants, at least profess our selves to be  
 Pearl-Merchants: let us tend our trade,  
 and pursue it, each one labouring to  
 find and to be found in Christ Jesus,  
 and by his grace get interest in his  
 Kingdom. *Give all diligence*, saith the 2 Pet. 5. 10  
 Apostle (not some, but all the diligence  
 you can possibly) *to make your Calling*  
*and Election sure.* Look that first the Mar. 6. 33.  
 Kingdom of God be sought, and the  
 Righteousness thereof, and then all o-  
 ther things shall be added unto you. It  
 should be the first and chief part of all  
 our care and labour, the first of all  
 our thoughts and counsels, to compass  
 it. Our Saviour lays load upon this  
 duty, to do it earnestly: *strive to enter* Luke 13.  
*in at the strait gate.* The lazy Merchant 24.  
 that strives not, thrives not in the best  
 pearls; the indifferent Christian doth  
 little or nothing to count on. It is the  
 known price of the market of Christ, Mar. 19.  
 that we must forsake all to follow him, 27, 28, &c.  
 and then all necessary and comfortable  
 good shall follow us. *Set your affections* Col. 3. 3.  
*on things which are above.* Where affe-



Actions are set, actions will be set too. Actions are but works in cold iron without affections; the heart and will earnestly joyned, make it glowing and red-hot iron, which makes quicker work.

Reas. 1.

A Reason may be drawn from Reason it self, That there is no ordinary good thing upon earth of any value can be got, but prudence and diligence must be laid out in acquiring it, or else we may go without it. Difficulty is a retainer to all excellent things; and Labour is a daily servant to Difficulty.

1 Cor. 9.

No man can win a race and the wager, but he must go wisely and earnestly about it, though what he gets be but a corruptible crown of parsley or smallage. Negligence and idleness cloaths a man with rags of disappointment and discredit. We get no sweet, but it must be washt first in sweat and labour for it. Pearis call men or their Factors to go to the *Indies*; to trade for them, to compass Sea and Land. And must not heavenly grace and spiritual blessings challenge labour much more, as their worth and excellency is more? Christ and his grace are counted poor

The apostle  
is p<sup>er</sup>fect  
&c. Heli.  
Quam fe-  
licitatem  
hominum  
natura  
sine labo-  
re percipit  
a Theo-  
dorer, de  
provident  
Serm. on  
Jam. 5.  
Joh. 6. 27.

and



and mean things, if they may not be judged worthy of our laying out as much labour for them, as we lay out for wealth that rusteth, and meat that perisheth.

2. Look we at the labour and diligence of wicked men, how earnest, how painful, how vigilant they are, how they travel and toil all their life, and weary themselves in wickedness, to be as sinful as they can be. What is the pearl they seek to purchase? The pearl of the Kingdom of Hell. With great pains they labour to get everlasting pains. O that we could but take an hint from them, and say, They beat their brains, spare no pains, to sin with the most, and the end of their work is the wages of death: is there not better reason and encouragement, that we should take as much pains for grace and eternal life? They might go to Hell more easily, and not so labour for eternal labour and sorrow. They need not use violence to take the Kingdom of Hell, it were better the Kingdom of Heaven suffered violence, and that we fought and took it with an holy force, Satan is brought in by *Cyprian*

*πόνος πόρος*  
*πύρος φ. 156*  
*Sophocles*  
*Erasm. in*  
*Chilad.*

*Mat. 11. 12*

Ciprian.  
Serm. de  
Eleemof.

bragging of his servants diligence in serving him, that the Saints of Heaven may be ashamed and blush, to be so cold and numb in Christs service, when the servants of hell are hot and sweating for it. Is it not a shame that *Judas* should watch and wake, and *Peter* sleep? Satan comes in with his wicked crew before Christ and his Saints thus bragging and insulting over them. I, O Christ, saith he, for these thou seest with me, neither endured smiting, or whips, or scourges. I suffered no cross, shed no blood for them, nor redeemed my family with the price of my passion. Nor do I promise them an heavenly Kingdom, nor restoring them by immortality, call them back again to paradise: I have no great and precious rewards of glory to give them. And yet they lay out all kind of cost for me, spend and sell their goods and estates to serve me, and suffer any reproaches or scorns for my sake: *Tuos tales munerarios Christus demonstra, &c.* Shew me now, O Christ, if thou canst, which of thine, the richest of them, will be at such cost for thee and thy service? What a sad thing is this, that we see  
many

many wicked men sail with an earnest<sup>r</sup> and speedier course to hell and damnation, than we are willing to do for Heaven and salvation?

3. Consider the promise, if we take pains for this pearl, and labour for the Kingdom of Heaven; we are promised our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord. Take some other Scriptures to shew the success of sanctified diligence; the Lord makes him ready to be found of those that seek heartily and diligently. And you shall seek me and find me, when you search for me with all your heart. *If thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding? If thou seekest her as silver, and sercheest for her as hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the Knowledge of God. The Lord is a rewarder of such as diligently seek him.* If we seek wisely by judgement of the Word, and labour diligently to obtain the grace of Christ, Christs heart labours to give his precious grace and peace to the laborious soul; which is excellently expressed by Nazianzen, *God is a thirst to be thirsted after.* If we by the grace of God, sancti-  
1 Cor. 15.  
58.  
Jer. 29. 13.  
Prov 2. 3,  
4, 5.  
Heb. 11. 6  
Sic t. firri  
Dens. Ne-  
zian.

fyng find diligence, by an higher a& of grace he shall find the pearl bring in a glorious recompence.

ay we not here see the foolish and unwise managing of our spiritual calling, be ashamed of it, and humbled for it? What shall we call those Christians that spend their strength, time, parts, wits, in seeking the things of the world, and not these goodly pearls, and this precious one, worth more then all the world? He should be a foolish Merchant, that would go beyond Sea with a great deal of pains and cost, and instead of rich Commodities, bring home his ship after some years, laden with shels and feathers instead of gold and pearls, which at the same cost he might have had. Such is the folly of us unwise souls, and unsound Christians, we voyage out the time of this life, to fill our purses, to fill our shops, our ware-houses, to get the pleasures and profits of this world, and neglect to buy the field of salvation, wherein the prime treasure is hid.

Alas Brethren, if we gain riches and inheritance for this world, and get not the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ

Christ for hope and salvation in another world. We may be Merchants, but not wise ones; we have peddled in Feathers, and have not driven that rich Trade of pearls, which would make us for ever. It is set forth as a principal folly and dotage of the beastly *Roman* Prince *Heliegabius*, El. Lam. prid. in vit. Ant. Helio- gab. that he caused his Courtiers to go round about, and thorow *Romes* City to seek Spiders, and when they had gathered ten thousand pounds weight of them, and their webs, he said, By this you may gather and understand how great the City of *Rome* is. And will not this be as arch a madness for us, to spend our days and strength in gathering the Spiders webs of perishing, and if not well antidoted, of soul-poysoning earthly riches, and to dye without Christ and his grace? He Job. 8. 14: builds the house of his hopes very weakly, whose beams are so slender as those of a Spiders house, which is very Isa. 39. 5: feeble Carpentry; and so are all the hopes & confidence in earthly things. O that we did not fall many, nay most of us, under the Prophets lash, that we lay out our labour, nay like Spiders

spin

Use 55. 2. spin out our bowels, spend our money, strength, and time, for that which is not bread, and for that which satisfieth not; for that which is not pearl, and enricheth not. Well were it, if we would take our souls aside sometimes, and soundly chide them thus. *O my soul, what is it thou sweatest, sorrowest, sigbest, labourst for all thy days? Why dost thou thus labour for meat that perisheth? Why dost thou not rather advance thy Trade in pearls, seeking to know Iesus Christ, and to be known of him? Why dost thou spend and spill thy spirit about vanity, and break thy soul with that which is but vexation of spirit?*

Use 2.

Use 2. May we not suspect and blame such ill Merchanting as this? that I may come neerer your particular society and calling: Some among you are sent beyond Sea, to Traffick there, and carry out goodly pearls, Ingenuity, Modesty, Temperance, Piety, the fruits of God's blessing upon their Parents care in good education; and Trafficking in other Countries, by barter, they bring home: nothing but

but the Atheism, Intemperance, &c. the vices of the Country they traded in, and so buy up, and bring home all the worst Commodities, and refuse Ware. The dangerouſest driving of your Trade, is this, to go out of the Country chaste, moderate, temperate, honest, humble, addicted to the good things of Christian Religion in the best way of Reformation, and after they have factored a while, to return back again with a cursed exchange, laden with the Atheism of *Italy*, poisoned with the Popery and policy of *Spain*, the fashions and lightness of *France*, the drunkenness and high intemperance of *High and Low Dutch*, and the loose and unclean hearts of such as set light by God and the Gospel. This may truly put into their mouths, the words of *Naomi*, *I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty*: I carried out goodly pearls, and I have brought home base pebbles. I carried out the Gospels favour, and knowledge of Christ, and now to Parents, Friends, Master, I give a rank favour of *Egyptian Onions and Leeks*, of *Moss* and Super-

Ruth 1.  
21.



Superstitions. This is to play the mad Merchant indeed, to scape shipwreck by Sea, and willingly to be foulwrackt by Land, making away the pearl of true Religion, and Christian manners, to eminent danger of the soul, loss of time, expence of portion, grieving of loving masters, breaking hearts of tender and careful Parents, and discrediting the Gospel. Let those are yet freed from falling into these gulfs take heed, and by prayer to God, and care keep themselves in the ways of Christ and the truth, labouring what ever other things they do, to bring home pearls and precious Merchandise, the knowledge and faith in Jesus Christ, improved and increased.

*Use 3.* We shall now come to the main stream of the Doctrine, where the instruction and exhortation reaches to this, not only to use all diligence in seeking goodly pearls; but having found the best, to sell all that we have to buy it.

*Quest.*

A man may say, but may Christ and his grace be bought? May we have them for buying? as if we could give



a full penny for a penny-worth?

No, we can never part with enough *Ans. 1.*  
for Christs sake, nor give his graces  
worth. Christ buys us, *for we are* *1 Cor. 6.*  
*bought with a price*; but we cannot buy  
him.

2. This Word buying, is only put  
in as a Lace suitable to the Cloth of *2.*  
the Parable, but is not in the fulness of  
the word of the substance of the Para-  
ble; as a Lace is not of the substan-  
tials of the cloth or garment. Here is  
mention of Merchants, that live of  
buying and selling, and bartering by  
exchange, or like valued commodities,  
and therefore buying and selling is put  
in. If all the Angels should turn Mer-  
chants, and put their stocks of riches  
and duties together, they could not  
give that which is the worth of the  
least grace of Christ, nor buy the  
meanest degree of salvation. In a pa-  
rable all things are not to be stretched  
to the length, but one main thing is  
minded as the full scope of it, the rest  
are but emblems and ornaments, and  
are not earnestly litterally to be urged. *Maldones*  
Instead of buying, we have God's free  
giving, whether it be bread, or water *John 6.*  
*Isa. 55. 1.*  
*Of Rev. 22.*

of life. If there be Gods giving, there is an exclusion of all our buying; and if it be called buying, it is very improper and strange buying; for it is *without money and without price*. If we thirst earnestly for it, it shall be ours, and we have benefit of it, as if we had bought it. This is our comfort, if we thirst, come, long, labour, care for, and earnestly seek Iesus Christ, and his Spirit of grace, Gods good will and heart is so much bent to such holy souls, that they shall have the grace sought and desired, as if they had bought it, and given the worth for it, when indeed they pay nothing, but out of Gods own Mint, his thirsting grace for his sanctifying and satisfying grace, they seek by a less degree, for an higher degree.

3.

Mark. 10.  
28.

3. This *selling of all he hath*, is not to be taken of meer selling, but with denying our selves, parting with all or any thing in the world we have, which would hinder us of Christ and his benefits: And this parting with all things, is not as a bargain, to give one thing of value for another, that the seller may get something by it; for  
when

when we part with all for Christ, we Psal. 44.  
 give nothing to God to increase his <sup>12.</sup>  
 wealth: and if we part with our sins  
 and lusts, it is plain we give no wor-  
 thy, nor desirable thing to God, but  
 that which he would have made away  
 and mortified. So that doing these  
 things is not the way of worthiness,  
 but the way of fitness, through Gods  
 fitting grace, and accepting of his own  
 fitting.

Now for the performance of this  
 Christian Merchant-like duty, we must  
 fall under the power of these two gra-  
 cious preparatives, before ever we can  
 come to digest directions, and yield to  
 the instructions to act accordingly.

I shall first propound the two neces-  
 sary preparatives, and then come to  
 the directive part for the managing of  
 this pearl-market.

Two things must be done, ere ever  
 we will set about this costly obtaining  
 of Christ, and doing any thing for him,  
 and his saving grace.

1. We must be convinced of the ne-  
 cessity of this pearl, else we shall ne-  
 ver do any matter of reckoning to  
 procure it, Tell a merchant of a com-  
 modity

modity is worth his buying, but will cost a great deal; unless he can see he has great need of it, and that he cannot well be without it, he will say, Let them buy it that will I care not for it, I will not give so much for it, I can profit as well by other commodities, I do not count it such a bargain as you think. But when he lights on a Bargain, concerning which he lyes under an eviction, that it is most gainful, and he has great need of it, then he lays out all he hath; he borrows of others all he can to make up the sum: he saith I must have it what ever it cost me, though I run into debt for some time; this will make me a man, this will make me a Merchant and somebody as well as others. In like sort it is in our spiritual commerce, we must labour to be convinced of the absolute necessity of Christ, and his renewing grace, reconciling grace; we must seek to get our eyes opened to see our lost nature; that we are wretched creatures without Christ, or else we shall be but cold and indifferent Chapmen; be very Fools in this Market, having a price in our hands

(31)

hands to get this prize of wisdom, and Prev 17:  
yet have no heart to it. O labour with 16.

the God of heaven, to open your eyes  
with a beam of spiritual light; to en-  
lighten you, and convince you of natu-  
ral darkness, spiritual hellish dark-  
ness in the soul, and lostness without Christ:  
that without his grace visiting you, ac-  
cepting you, renewing you, pardoning  
and dwelling in you, you are un-  
done souls, broken Merchants, broken  
in your Souls and Consciences Amos 8:  
in this life; broken members in the 9. 13. 14.  
Church on earth; broken for the miserable  
world to come; bankrupt for all eter- merchants  
nity, and banished from the Staple in merchants  
Heaven. It is the bite of bitter hun- of miseries  
ger, that makes us the better bite of Ar chylus.  
dread. Unless that which Christ said,  
you see, *that without him you can do no-* John 15. 5  
*thing*; you will not do any great  
matters in seeking him. It is pressing  
necessity that opens the purse, opens  
the heart to look after things we have  
need of. It is necessity that raises the  
price of a thing, and raises the spirit  
after it. In that to *Laodicea* given out  
by Christ, he offers his Merchandise to  
be sold, Gold tryed in the fire, because

Rev. 3.8. She is naked, and eye-salve to anoint the eyes, that she may see. This of eye-salve is put the last, yet it is in order of nature and time, first and chief. A blind merchant, a dark soul, what can such an one do to judge of Commodities, what they are and what they are worth? how can they judge of gold and white raiment, unless they see nakedness and poverty; and that must be first by the anointing of the eyes to open them?

2. He must be convinced of the preciousness and excellency of grace for all purposes, for body, soul, calling, estate, this life, life to come, to fill up all gaps, else he may coldly profess Christ, and seek Christ as nothing worth, seek him in a losing way, never sweat for it, nor part with much for him. To the woman of Sychar our Saviour said, *If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water*, If we be not well possess of the admirable worth of Gods gift of grace, Christ and his benefits, we will

will not so much as heartily ask for him, and pray for him.

There must be some raising of the heart and affections to love Christ by the light of judgement, as being discovered to be the real, excellent, necessary thing for union to the soul, else we shall stand idle in the market-place all the day long, and it shall stand in the Market as a Commodity that is passed by, and not well looked at.

Being gone thus far in preparation, a small bidding will bring an hungry man to move and eat. What must now be done to get this pearl: I shall give aim to it by these few and plain directions.

1. A Christian must part with, and give away himself for Christ. Self naturally denies and distances Christ, therefore spiritually we must deny our selves, and follow Christ. Self-love is the wall of partition betwixt Christ and *Mar. 16. 24* us, that must be thrown down, that we may come to him. *Abraham* said to the rich man, poor enough in hell, *There is a great Gulph fixed between us* *Luke 16.* *and you, so that they which would pass* *26.* *cannot.* We must get an holy riddance of



of our natural self, which is an unpas-  
 sable gulf, and hindres us from co-  
 ming to, and closing with Christ, till it  
 be removed. We must deny all our  
 own righteousness, worthiness, parts,  
 natural and acquired abilities, and  
 count them all nothing, forsake clea-  
 ving and trusting to any thing, to re-  
 ceive Christ. As in Physical Receipts,  
 we are advised to take them upon an  
 empty stomack: so Christ is not right-  
 ly received of any, but naked and em-  
 pty souls; he brings that with him,  
 which is pure fulness, and cloathing.  
 Till a man be emptied, he is not fit to  
 be filled at Christs Fountain: there  
 must be self-pouring out, that there  
 may be Christs pouring in. We are  
 Christ-negatives by nature, till we be  
 self-negatives by grace.

2. We must part with all the coun-  
 sels, profitable and pleasant ways of  
 the world without, yea, and of flesh  
 and blood, which is the world with-  
 in us. All the lusts of natural and  
 carnal men must be rejected from gi-  
 ving us counsel in this spiritual and  
 heavenly matter. The World will  
 give cross Counsels to the word of the  
 Cross.



Cross. We must yield up our selves to the rule of Christ, and word of his grace. A man must carry his Trade *David's way, Thy Testimonies are my Counsellors*, speaking to God. This pearl we would buy, must not only be our riches bought, but our master, our wisdom, our director. how to buy it, and keep it. We must resolve as the holy man did, I am thine, O Christ, and thy way, save me as thou wilt.

Psal. 119.  
24.

Yea, but thus I shall be but a silly Merchant, if I do not as others do, mind my profit and advantage in the world, as the rest use.

Tam sum  
Christe,  
terra me  
licet v s.  
Natiuit.  
Object.

Not so, it may keep thee from being a crafty, and too earthly a Merchant, but it will make thee a wise and holy merchant for it: This is not to neglect your Trade, but to advance it. Supernatural acts of grace, and being ruled by them, do not destroy our wits in natural things and civil, but promote them, raise them higher, regulate them better.

Answe.  
Per super-  
naturalia  
bona gra-  
tie Domi-  
poteat  
domant  
ure Domi-  
Catholica  
prolego  
a libe-  
1 Sentent.

Godliness will teach us to drive a good Trade, for it hath great gain, the promises of this Life, and that which is to come: you may keep shop,

you

you may have profit, you may and must be diligent in your Callings, notwithstanding the love of Christ. Christianity is no enemy to good Husbandry, only it must have an influence into our husbandry, it must be observed before it, and set over it. If the Commandments of God be your *Lex Mercatoria*, it will teach you the way of moderate and honest gains. It will guide you to take peace with peace of Conscience, and fill your purse with your right hand, to buy and sell to others, as you would have them do to you. This should be the Law of all men; *for this is the Law and the Prophets*. This is to follow Divine Counsel, to be honest and very upright, rather than to strive to be very rich in the world: You see they that run very hastily on to be rich, earnestly, craftily, according to the manner of the world, they put out a great hand to grasp much, but often God fills it not. Or, if their hand be full, it is not sanctified to them, they have Gods bounty, but want his blessing: it is not sweet, safe, and sound gains. *Better is little with the fear of the Lord; than great*

Mat. 7. 12.

Prov. 15. 6.

*great treasure and trouble therewith.* And besides trouble of conscience, the trouble of discontent, and trouble of losses and spoiling, which may attend ill-gotten wealth, as well as riches of righteousness; there will be trouble enough when they and God shall come to a final reckoning. And in this way of making the Word of God your Counseller; (for grace is both begun and advanced that way,) let me tell you of one thing adheres to this lesson, avoid those unprecious and cunning paths, for the love of riches to be unfaithful and injurious by way of accounts to your Co-partners, and helpful Correspondents. The grace of Christ is animated with truth and uprightness; by that way it both comes, continues, and increases best. Defrauding one another, makes the defrauded the loser, but God the avenger. Do not think to make your selves a good harvest, reaping it out of the calamities of others. They that have been faithful to you in healthful correspondence, though beyond the Seas, be not unfaithful to them in sinister and injurious accounts; you would not have

zeph. i. 9.  
1 Thes. 4. 6  
Ibid. Pein-  
fida.

so done with your selves, do not so deal with them; lay aside all frauds in seeking the pearl of truth.

3. We must sell away, and part with all our sins for ever by unfeigned repentance. Pearls grow in Sea-water, and this pearl spiritual grows in and by the waters of godly sorrow. Christs grace dwells in a clean and washed Room. We must not exchange our sins one for another, nor part with a greater degree of sinning, for a less to sin more soberly, or more secretly, but part with all, branch and root, in one day. And not only part with them, but part with them in choller, with an holy anger and detestation,

Mat. 14. 19. *casting them out as an abominable branch*, contrary to our comfort, contrary to the beauty and worth of this pearl, which being pure and shining should not live, nay cannot abide in an heart that is an unclean box. We must part with our sins, as we do with detestable things, with a *Get you hence*. Christ is not a pearl or jewel to be worn in a Swines snout; he was once a pearl, scattered and laid in a stable, but he will be so no more, he will have communion

Mark. 5.

Mat. 50. 12

munion only with the pure in heart; Trading in sin, and in these pearls, cannot stand together. Every one that names the name of Christ soundly, and rightly, *departs from iniquity*.<sup>2 Tim. 2: 19.</sup> If Christ be willing to take away the guilt of sin, we have reason to resolve to labour to take away the power, and implore his grace daily to help us. To seek to obtain this pearl, with a purpose to live in our sins, is to no purpose. Christ preaches salvation, but repentance before it. A goodly and fair pearl hanging at the ears, forehead, or neck, deserves to have a clean face.

4. We must part with our time, and sell it away to obtain the blessings of Christ. We are bid to redeem our time, Eph. 5. and good reason, when by so doing we may get the pearl of the Redeemer. There must be a wise improvement of our time, a tithe paid to Christ from time in our shops; a tithe from times of our pleasures, some portion of each day to deal with God in the name of Christ, for the grace of Christ. We may keep our Trades, and attend unto the Word too, and not count it out  
of

of season on a Shop-day. We may read and pray every day, and occasionally hear the word on week days, and yet lose nothing in our ordinary Callings by it. Merchants above other Trades will have less excuse, as being not in such necessity, as lower Callings, their calling not binding them to such continual attendance as others, who have constant manual employments, or more necessary dependance upon Markets. *Thomas* lost a pearl, a precious sight of Christ, by being absent once from meeting of the Disciples, to whom Christ appeared: he regained it by future care in that particular.

John 20.  
24, 25.

5. We must part with all assistance, trust, and affection to any creature, yea the dearest, to bestow the strength and vigour of our souls upon Jesus Christ. If Christ be not better worth than all earthly things, he is worth nothing. Not, but that we may use our natural love, civil and friendly trust in men, with whom we have to do. For love and trust are the bonds of civil fellowship and communion. Yet our faith, hope, love, must so knit our hearts to Christ, as all these must give way to  
our

our confession, and cleaving to Christ, when we cannot do them both. As when we are called to our beds and sleep, we put all our cloaths and bravery aside to go to our repose. We must forsake Father, Mother, Wife, Children, House, Lands, Shop, all our Merchandize, nay, our Life, we must not hold it so fast as our pearl, to confess Christ, and to be faithful unto the death; if we be called to the Testimony of Jesus. And here is the lustre, and illustrious brightness of this pearl, that it hath given radiations, and beams of lightsome comfort in and to the souls of believers, when they have been stript of all for Christs sake. The reproch of Christ hath more contented them, then all the treasures of the world could have done. The *Italian* Martyr, from his nasty dungeon of the *Leonine* prison, writes his Letter as from a most delectable Orchard, and Garden of pleasure; for so he calls it. Many men and women have proved wise and holy Merchants for Christ, parting with all their goods and livelyhood in the world, yea, and lives too, to keep their pearl

Heb. 11.

20.

Pomponius  
us Algeri-  
us in Bo-  
es Acts  
and Mon.



pearl of Faith and confession of Christ,  
 and have turned Merchants into war-  
 tyrs. We know not whether our sins  
 and Gods wrath may not bring us for  
 contempt of the Gospel of grace, to  
 a day of sore tryal, to put our faith  
 and love to the fiery touchstone, to  
 shew whether we can part with all for  
 Christ, or no, in a stormy day, who  
 have professed and braged great things  
 in that kind in a fair day. Let us think  
 of it, and be prepared for it, remem-  
 bring the cloud of witnesses, who  
 have chalked out the way to Heaven,  
 not with white, but with red, even  
 their own blood, though now they  
 walk in white, for they are worthy.  
 Let us hear what *Paul* said to this mat-  
 ter, the foreman and chief of Christi-  
 an Merchants. *My life (saith he) I count*  
*not dear unto my self, so that I might fi-*  
*nish my course with joy, &c.* Again, when  
 friends were crying, loth to part, ob-  
 testing and beseeching him not to go  
 to Jerusalem; he answered, *What mean*  
*you to weep and break mine heart; for I*  
*am ready, not to be bound only, but also to*  
*dye at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord*  
*Jesus.*

Heb. 12.1

Rev. 3.

acts 20.

24.

acts 21.13.

To give you further examples of encouragement in this fore adventure to keep your pearl, as they at Sea cast all overboard to save their ship and lives; I shall adjoyn a wise Christian Adventurer or two. *George Carpenter*, a Martyr in *Bavaria*, having it promised to him, if he would recant, he should return safely to live with his wife and children; he answered, My wife and children are so dearly beloved of me, that they cannot be bought from me for all the riches and possessions of the Duke of *Bavaria*; ytt for the Love of my Lord God, I will willingly forsake them. Another of *Tournay* in *France*, Thomas Calburg. Ma tyr. apud Goulart. ut sup. called to recant the day before his death, with hope of pardon added, he said, But that which you call pardon and freedom for my body, I call the destruction and perdition of my soul: to me that am to assert the truth, eternal life is of more weight, then this fading and momentary life. The Lord grant, that if we come to so sore a Market for this pearl, we may have as holy and constant hearts, as these blessed Servants, and Martyrs of Christ, holding fast our pearl, and then we hold

Goulart.  
in loc.  
com. Ad  
poptheg.  
Sacr.

hold fast a crown, better then a crown  
 Rev. 3.11 of pearls, that none can take it from  
 us.

Merito. I conclude all with this motive and  
 incentive. Lay on, lay out what ever  
 God calls you to for this pearl: the  
 meeting of Christ and your souls, and  
 the spiritual and eternal advantage  
 will redound to you, will more then  
 recompence you for all you part with  
 and forgo. Consider but what earth-  
 ly things cost, which perish in the use.  
 If they in the world prize mean things  
 in comparison, as Peacocks, Parrets,  
 1 Kings 10.22. Apes, Ebony, Ivory, and such far-fetch-  
 Cant. 2.6 ed things, as ships pass the vast Seas, and  
 Deut. 30. men go thorow great dangers to bring  
 12, 13. them: O how shall we sin against rea-  
 Rom. 10. son, soul, and Christ-too, if we will not  
 6, 7, 8. lay forth the best of our labour, to seek  
*this Kingdom, and the righteousness there-*  
*of?* This we may seek and find at  
 home, we need not cross the Seas, but  
 cross the street, and go into the next  
 Garden of Gods servants, and meet  
 with Christ feeding among the Lillies.  
 For it is not beyond the Seas, that we  
 should say, Who will fetch this pearl  
 for us? But Christ and his Word of  
 grace

grace is nigh us; it is put to our mouths, eyes, ears, hearts, even the word of Faith which is preached. This is an eternal, incorruptible Pearl, everlasting Merchandize. The great question at the last day will be for this, when all pearls, gold and jewels in the world else are perisht in the great flame that burnt up the earth with the works <sup>2 Pet 3.10</sup> thereof. This is the Lamp and Oyl with light of the wise Virgins; all the world will be found fools without it. Grace of Christ is the Wedding-garment of the bidden and blessed Guests; this is the true and durable wealth will make rich for ever.

If to be wealthy in a mass of worldly riches for some few years men can find no measure of careing, make unwillingly at night an end of working, and yet all comes to a poor contentment, and scanty time of possessing, and using: how far more worthily should we use all diligence to be possess of the riches of the grace of Christ, the enjoyments whereof are with joy indeed, and the comforts are dated with endless Eternity. Hereafter Wise Christians will find reason to bless the day,

Si apud  
nos preti-  
um habet,  
quod si-  
nem habet  
fit nobis  
supra per-  
itum si  
possit esse  
sine fine.  
Eucher. in  
parennet.  
epist. ad Val-  
erianum.

day in which they heartily heard t'  
report of Christs grace; bleſs God f  
the instrument was made effectual  
tender grace and ſalvation to th  
when they find all bleſſings and ble  
neſs in Chriſt, which will fully ſa  
the ſouls and bodies of Saints ir  
ven, with all ſatisfying content.  
for ever, evermore,

---

FINIS.

(46)

day in which they heartily heard the  
report of Christs grace; blefs God for  
the instrument was made effectual to  
render grace and falvation to them,  
when they find all blessings and blessed-  
ness in Christ, which will fully take up  
the souls and bodies of Saints in hea-

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Calvert, Thomas

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